Freddo Cuore

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Freddo Cuore

by Aerosol

Summary

"Don't waste me."

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

“Will? Will, are you there? “

Will looked up from the novel he studied intently for already half an hour, listening to the slightly panicked seasoned reputation that echoed from the upper floor of the house. He sighed and put the book on the table, took off his reading glasses and rose slowly from the comfortable sofa cushion.

His hips cracked a little as they would be outraged about the rude movement, but Will was already profound of the language his rattling bones soke and knew that he was still on the safe side when it came to the use of his limbs. Although his age headed to the maturing 60, it still hardly bothered him to move or perform other actions. Although he ran faster out of breath than before, and when he forfeited it with the weather conditions while he was walking with the dogs, he was greeted with a persistent pulling and hammering in his rusty tendons and muscles in the following night, but he was still in a wonderfully intact condition. Life had punished him neither with cancer nor any other illness for which he was extremely grateful.

“Will!”

The call now pierced with honest fear, spoke shrill and insistent.

Will hastened to cross the living room and climbed up the stairs with a tolerable speed. However, he first had to collect himself a bit, listening to his vaguely accelerated heartbeat before he could repel of the railing and go into the hallway. He walked straight ahead to the bedroom, where he had Hannibal left an hour ago. “I'm here, Hannibal. I come! “ He cried and stretched his hand after the bronze knob in the gloomy corridor and wooed it with his warm fingers, turned it and opened the door.

“Why don’t you answer me when I call you? “ the psychiatrist asked reproachfully before Will could even manage to enter the room. One hand was clenched in his lap, the other rested closely at his side.

Dutifully Will shut the door behind him before he completely turned to his husband.

“I’m not that fast anymore,dear.” he said, mixed appeasement in his tone. He looked to the bed on which Hannibal sat and held his hand out for him demandingly. Without hesitation Will went to sit on the bed and took Hannibal's hand in his. When Hannibal felt the warmth of his fingers, he wrapped around them instinctively, enclosed them with cramping desire. Age had left its clear, tapping marks on his skin, but even if more wrinkles clung around his eyes and his hair had become thin and snow-white, poring over his skull, he'd never have to lose his majestic aura. Not in all these years. Now, however, a haggard expression crept into his wrung, chiseled features, his flesh stretched and the horizontal line of his parched lips whetted.

“For a moment I thought you were ... “

“Gone? “ Will had to smile at the thought. It merely seemed an absurdity to leave this man after all these years. “Keep on dreaming, old man. You haven’t get rid of me for more than thirty years. Do you really think I’d make this so easy for you now? “ he teased the former psychiatrist,who ad to retire five years ago. His baritone was soft and light as the July breeze, flying through Florence and whistling around their house in the early evening.

Hannibal gestured him to come closer, bend over to him with a movement of his head. Will did as he was told - the time in which he asked questions, was long over. They kissed. Will exfoliated tasted exfoliated peppermint and sleepy strands of power. *Home.* He was an unabated addictive drug. He pushed closer to the familiar body, offering him the protection and security that had largely determined the structure of his existence and still did with every taken breath. When they broke apart, Hannibal drew him closer and Will obeyed, embedded his cheek on the doctor's chest. Soon, Hannibal drove his fingers through his curly hair, plowed the aged thatch in playful mania.

Will enjoyed it. He always had.

“No.” he heard Hannibal say from above. “But maybe because of *this*.”

He shrugged dismissively with his shoulder. His left arm was bandaged. Will felt instinctively the discontent welling up in the psychiatrist’s mind and buried his nose in his soothing neck flexion, inhaled the smell of lavender soap, milk and honey.

“You should not have cooked without my supervision. You’re lucky that the water wasn’t boiling when you showered your arm with it.” he said quietly, but sternly.

Yesterday’s incident was still painfully distributed in his waking memory. The naked fear had gripped him when he had seen the scarlet hissing discoloration of Hannibal's arm, the blisters throwing themselves into predictable stretch about the tortured flesh. He had driven his husband to the hospital where they cleaned his wounds and bandaged his arm. And after they got home and Hannibal recovered in the bedroom, Will had gone to the lower level, sat down on the couch, buried his face in his hands and wept bitterly. The memories of Hannibal, when he had met him for the first time, how he had observed the dedication and dexterity he cooked with, full of vigor and undiminished intensity, hurt the most in those moments. You could see how the past became paler while the present darkened. What would be in their future then? Would this future even still be worth of living? The omen of death was enthroned as the pendulum of the Grim Reaper swinging over their heads and it was a guessing game, who of them had to cross the Styx first. Will didn’t really want to think of such things, but the circumstances demanded that he did it more and more often and he was afraid.

Not from death itself, because pain and agony were familiar enough to him. It was just hurtful to know that everything was simply **over** that brought tears in his eyes. Knowing that Hannibal would be gone forever someday. Or he himself. Whatever scenario he played through, there would be always one of them left alone in the end. Lonely. As both of them had been before their meeting.

Will did not want to be lonely again. Never. He dug his fingers deeper into the velvet fabric of Hannibal’s shirt.

“*Supervision.*" Hannibal said and took him like a anchor rope out of his thoughts. "Since when I am a prisoner in my own house? “

Vigorous anger swung in the heavy accent. Will knew that already. Spontaneous, lecterous tantrums were not unusual in their household anymore. It had changed a lot, especially in the last four months. Especially since Hannibal could no longer call a practice his own.

"I'm sorry." Will said simply, even if he knew that no one was to blame for what the decay’s process inflicted on a human body. He apologized on principle. He apologized because often, it was the only thing he could do in these situations. He would have loved acting like God and had given them a second, a third, even a *fourth* youth. But since he was not more than a simple man from bone and clay, he asked for forgiveness for his imperfection. For his no-good. Silence, soaked In mute consideration, wafted in the air.

“It's hard to get used to it that your own body is no longer able to afford the actions you have in mind.” Hannibal then said thoughtfully. It was the most of an apology that Will could expect and he accepted it. No more questions. No time to argue and to vegetate in grief.

“I know.” Will said. In his self-forgetfulness he stroked Hannibal's chest, circulating his fingers where the source of his lover’s life beated. “I don’t want you to feel imprisoned, but look at it from my point of view for once. We must be cautious. I don’t want to lose you.”

“You won’t lose me if you do exactly what I asked you for.”

Every fiber in Will’s body stiffened. This topic was distasteful to him.

“You know that I won’t do it. No way.” he said. His tone cut sharper than intended.

Though the lingering resistance, Hannibal's fingers didn’t stop plowing his hair, not even for a single second.

“If you do it, you’ll be able to keep me with you forever. "he said quietly. "I’ll be a part of you, inextricably linked with your body and mind until the end of your days. Is this not what you want? “

Will didn’t saw in his eyes. He avoided to drown and get manipulated by them like many times before.

“I won’t eat your heart, Hannibal. That would be dishonourable."

“There would be nothing more honourable than to know that my flesh melted on your tongue.” He lay his lips in Will’s hair, quickly followed by a gentle kiss on his scalp. A gesture for a child which didn’t want to follow orders.“ If you really love me, you’ll do it when time has come. And I believe it is going to occur very soon. I feel it.”

Will sighed.

“You're still an incorrigible playwright.” he criticized.

“You fell in love with this incorrigible playwright.”

“And this incorrigible playwright fell in love with me.”

“Do you regret it?”

Will did as he would concentrate and think over. Then he shook his head.

“I’d never have wanted another, I guess.”

A laugh. Like rustling leaves in the autumn wind.

“Dito.”

Will smiled. Hannibal and monosyllabic. It had really changed a lot. But not everything was bad.

“Will?”

“Hm?“

“Thank you.”

Will peered upward, parking his chin on Hannibal's torso. “For what? “

“That I could have you all for myself. Till the end of my life.”

Will raised an eyebrow.

“Did I have choice?“ he asked. “After you had forced all people out of my life whom I felt something for?"

“I wanted to purify you from their harmful effects. To bath you in mine and only mine.” the doctor replied. Their views combined. “I always wanted the best for you - and for Abigail.”

Will smiled weakly. “Yes.” he said. “I've forgiven you a long time ago. In the end it’s good that it has come to all this. I’m glad.”

Hannibal looked at him. He returned the smile. Each climbing millimeter seemed to be overcome by gratitude and content.

"I'm glad, too." His hand moved from Will’s hair to cup his cheek. Will leaned into the touch. He was tame, compared to his trainer. "Will? You know it, right? " Seriousness lay in these words. Almost doubtful. Urgently.

Will did not need to think. He knew it.

"Sure." He said. His blood crept roaring in his ears. "I love you too."

They spoke only very little after that. It seemed everything important had already been said and there was no need to destroy this state in some rough way. Soon Will yawned and decided to get a small rest in Hannibal’s embrace. A little nap during the day was not a shame, was it? They were in a house that belonged to them, in a city that was known for its

aristocratic beauty, in a country that lay far beyond the continent which probably was still searching after them. They had raised a daughter and brought her up the right way, allowed her to lead a if not ordinary, then nice life and she had blessed them with a grandchild for it.

They were happy. They were together.

And everything else did not matter much.

After Will had fallen into a deep sleep, the former psychiatrist stroked his back, holding him with one arm and let the years given them fondly reminisce in front of his mind's eye. His memory palace contained a brilliant choice, and he pecked out both the peaceful and the warlike events. All of the disputes, the anger, the little things they had put to death for. The murders they committed together, the conversations at night and day. The hatred, the *hatred*, the tears and affection. The half-baked perfection of two individuals, limping on the globe of Philophobia.

He watched Will while he did this and he praised his form, his soul, his profile with such feverish obsession as he always did since they had met for the first time. His skin might be torn, his beard growth cleared and his hair pale, but what he loved, what he hadn’t exchanged for any prize of this earth, was still breathing beside him, relaxed and without nightmares, wonderfully stable and fragile at the same time. Perhaps he had never got things straightened out with God, but Will was an angel without wings, and when he saw him, he had decided to make him **his** angel for God didn’t deserve this astonishing creature. To serve him as *his* wings and chains.

He could have spent millenia with this man and he would not have been sorry for a single moment. But eternity existed only in the illusionary veil of a fairy tale and Hannibal was no longer a child, neither was Will. He was too old to cry and to mourn. He glanced at hisbandaged arm andsighed silently. He lost his strength. Something he could not accept neither wanted to.

Careful not to wake Will up,he stretched his healthy arm to the drawer of the bedside table, opened it and rummaged until he found what he needed. Will muttered unintelligible syllable shreds as he moved.Hannibal reassured him and told him to be quiet, whispering that everything would just be a hallucination and it would quit if he just continued sleeping.

Andso did Will.He stayed asleep.

When Will awoke in the bulging of the clear dark evening sun, he sensed immediately that something had become different.There was no real sense, rather an inspiration. The curse of his empathy. He raised his dusky head, squinted as to agree to a loose command as he looked to the bedside table where someone had started the floor lamp. It had been turned off, as Will had entered the room. He spotted a note someone had written in bold letters. Three words. He narrowed his eyes, made an effort to decipher the script from short distance.

Don't waste me

"Hannibal? "

Will's ask hovered quietly in the room, very timid, even brutal. The silence crushed his nerves and shortened his airway. "Hannibal, can you hear me?"

Hannibal did not answer. He had drifted into the saving arms of sleep too, eyes closed and lips broken in a volatile fission. A faux pas of the good doctor he would not have done a few years ago, not under any circumstances. Rudeness knew no statute of limitations for him. Will smiled with the indulgence of a mother who had brought her yawning child to bed, barely beginning with the first chapter of the bedtime story when she realized that sleep had already set in. Hannibal did not move.

Will held his wrinkled, great, divine hand in his, held it for a time that soon seemed like minutes, then like hours. Blinking away a lonesome tear he caressed the thin protruding knuckles with his thumb, touched the withered skin of the only love he had ever known in his life and waited for him to awake again, watching him with these maroon hell banks and a small smile squeezed into the oh-so-thin lips. Only for him. Always just for him ...

"Hannibal?"

He swallowed. His voice broke a little. His throat scratched and the taste of copper befuddled his palate.

"Hannibal !".

He waited. But Hannibal didn't wake up.

...

(He never woke up again.)

And when Will realized that the hand he held, stiffened, the skin he touched became colder and colder and Hannibal's lungs accomplished no breathing anymore, he lay down to him,

rested his head one last time on the motionless chest and held very still.

The tears that followed thereafter came slowly, but plentiful. They irrigated a heart that beat no longer, mourned a soul, whether devil or angel, that no longer was in the room. The silence cried in the former profiler's ears until he was deaf and only the sonorous nothing rang in his ears. When after countless time Will stopped crying, he got up with aching bones, the mattress and his dead man leaving to go down to the kitchen. He wiped his face with the hem of his sleeve drying the salt-encrusted cheeks, rubbing the last witnesses of his loss from the moisty red corners of his eyes as he looked in the drawer for the knife Hannibal had once used to carve the scar above his left hip . How often he had stopped at exactly this point and considered his own cruel work while they had rolled and loved in the sheets? Will's vision blurred again, overwhelmed by the next onslaught of emotions that tore his mind like the roots of an old wrinkled coconut tree. All these years he had not lost one iota of the power and immense intensity of his empathy.

Memories rattled like hailstones on him, snapshots of naked bodies pressed against each other, desperate, eager, lustful, deadly. *Delicious.* The heat of two mouths, mutually strangled with dominated vehemence. The battle, the fall, the sin, the fire ... the fear. The coexistent growing dependence. The games. The promise, the homage, the incantations that were never enough. The doubts and contempt, the indulgence, the food. He thought of a song that he had heard time not too long ago. It was left in mind, because it was a perfidious description of their relationship ... *had been*. He hummed the melody of the chorus while he was looking for the knife. The cadence was wrong, the rhythm a disaster, his voice thin and girlish, but he did not care.

How many nights have I live inside you?

How many dreams has your pain rewarded me?

How many night have you already lost yourself?

How many dreams have I given a new birth to you?

In the third drawer that rested next to the stove, he found it. Hidden under used cooking utensils, chastely locked up like the bastard child of a noble family. Something else that was not like the behaviour, Will used to know from Hannibal. He usually stored utensils meticulously lined up in the top drawer compartments. Well, it seemed this knife had not only evoked mixed feelings in him but in the doctor, too.

Will fished it out between plastic spoons and baking pans, weighed it carefully in his hand. It was light, the blade painted with dust, but sharp as ever. He turned to the tap on the sink and ran water over the bare steel beads, until even the last grain of dirt and spider web was gargled in the depths of the drain.

From my burning love he sang softly, supporting and crumbling

No demon can save you

From my burning love

No God or miracle can free you anymore

He took a fresh towel from the cupboard and wiped the blade, then covered the handle with a trembling but resolute hardness. His pulse was pounding accusingly in his ears as he ascended the stairs for the second time, only to fall even deeper as he had already done it. The fall from all humanity and understanding what was left in him.

No one had ever seen or ever wanted to understand what it was that had Hannibal and him merged together for all eternity. Only Abigail had a vague idea about it, but Abigail was not there, she lived two suburbs away from here, together with her husband and son who both had no knowledge of the murderer, they called *darling* and *mom* occasionally. Will would call her later and put Hannibal's death in knowledge. Later, when all he had to do until then, had been done. He knew what he had to do. He knew it, and yet the tears ran down his cheeks freely.

The meat would be salty. Other spices he would not use. Or was this too stale? A little cribbing in Hannibal’s sacred recipe index would enlighten him.

He went into their bedroom and did his work rapidly and without great caution. He had neither the patience nor the mastery of being human in this act. How he should explain the undertaker about the battered condition of the corpse, didn’t interest him much in that moment. He took the heart out of his scarf bleeding cocoon and stumbled with him down the steps to the kitchen. He searched for a bucket and poured cold water in it until it almost spilled over the edge. He took two boxes full of ice cubes from the freezer,filled them into the water with a clanking and dived the heart into it, washed the blood from his fingers until only some remains stayed stuck under his nails. It took a little time before he had met the conditions for preparing and ultimately to make the food. Until then, the meat had to stay fresh. The whining of his dogs from the living-room seemed so far away. He could not answer them. He acted in a fever.

From my burning love ...

From his burning love actually no one could freem him, this was quite true. Hannibal had tattooed himself on the chrysalis of his soul, the imago of his existence was his merit and his heir, the restless smoldered now through his veins starving. He had taken care of it that Will didn’t forget him, not unwillingly, and not of his own accord. He was branded in the truest sense of the word.

But maybe, maybe ... this love was allowed to cool down.

When he tasted and ate the one dish not even Hannibal could offer him until the end of his life.

His own cold cannibal heart.

Bon appetit.

End Notes

Used Song : English Translation of Brennende Liebe – Oomph!

Hope you liked it :)
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